

ALGERIA AFTER THE REFERENDUM

Prospects for Peace

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ALGIERS

HOW much longer can the civil war go on, and how will it end?

This is an indelicate question to ask in Algeria. Everybody is haunted by it, but nobody likes hearing it. To the French soldier it sounds like a reproach: why hasn't he yet quelled the revolt which, on the 1st of November, entered its fifth year? In rebel ears it rings like an insinuation: is not the *fellagha* just about at the end of his tether?

Only the extremists in either camp are ready to answer it. "The struggle will continue until Algeria becomes independent," says the F.L.N. (National Liberation Front) zealot. The diehard European settler—the *ultra*, as he is called—says, "The trouble will be over as soon as Algeria is integrated with France once and for all."

The ordinary Algerian, Moslem, Christian, or Jew merely shrugs his shoulders, as if to say, "Who knows if there is any way out of the nightmare?" Although his hopes have risen in recent weeks, he does not indulge them, for he is afraid that he might yet be disappointed. And he is puzzled. He had grown accustomed to two rival sets of slogans—"Independence," "Free Algeria," on the one hand, and "Integration," "*Algérie*

française," on the other—which he thought he understood. They seemed to present the only possible alternative. And now de Gaulle has come along with a new watchword, "Fraternity," to reconcile the irreconcilables. A word like "fraternity" is all very well when it is uttered in a church, mosque, or synagogue, but is it practical politics anywhere in the world, and more especially in a country seething with hatred? De Gaulle's program for peace is not easy to grasp, for it is necessarily as complex as the Algerian problem itself. What is this problem?

Here is a multi-racial society whose members not only differ in physique, mentality, language, and religion, but whose various communities exist at different stages of civilization ranging all the way from the late Stone Age through a decadent medievalism to ultra-modernism. Between them there has always been tension, fear, envy, incomprehension, together, it is true, with some other things as well. Yet the communities co-existed quietly enough for more than a century under the old colonial system, which was not unduly harsh. Primarily for their own good, the European settlers introduced sanitation, fertilized the soil, built cities, villages, roads, dams, power stations, set up schools and a university, erected factories. Yet the native Moslems also benefited. Formerly they could scarcely produce enough offspring to make up for the losses suffered through epidemic and endemic disease as well as through incessant internecine warfare. With the improvement in hygienic conditions and the enforcement of law and order, the Moslem population grew from a bare 2,300,000—the first census was taken in 1856—to the present figure of over 9,000,000. In this number there are today some 1,300,000 Arabs, Berbers, Kabylans,

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and Mozabites who enjoy much the same living standards as the European *colons*.

Until the end of the First World War Algerian nationalism was virtually nonexistent. There had never, down the ages, been an Algerian nation. The earliest known inhabitants of the western half of North Africa were the Berber tribes. Handsome and intelligent, the Berbers have not only an African tan on their white skin, but are steeped in African primitivism. Carthage rose and fell, the Roman legions came and went, and the Berbers relapsed into their old way of life, as if nothing had happened. Only the Arab invaders who arrived early in the 8th century stayed on, imposing the new faith of Mohammed at the sword's point, occupying the rich flatlands and pushing the Berbers into the inhospitable mountains. During the Middle Ages short-lived Berber kingdoms sprang up and vanished in the Magreb—the Sunset Land, as the Arabs call western North Africa—but the seat of government was always either in Morocco or Tunisia.

ALGERIA first became a separate entity when the Greek pirate Barbarossa, in the 16th century, seized this anarchic middle portion of the Magreb and made it into a province of the Ottoman Empire. Algiers, with its Casbah, or fortress, served as a stronghold for the Saracen corsairs who preyed on Mediterranean shipping and raided Southern Europe, bringing back shiploads of loot and captive "infidels" who fetched high prices on the slave market. The Casbah finally fell to the French in 1830. Even under French rule Algeria continued to be a sort of historical no-man's-land. Nominally a French province, rather more than half its 1,200,000 European settlers hail from Spain, Italy, and Greece.

Early in the 20th century, something strange and unexpected began to stir in Algeria. The Moslems, rousing themselves from their age-old slumbers, grew dissatisfied with their lot and aspired to something better: their dream was to become equals with the French, to be French—still Moslems,

yet French. On the outbreak of the First World War they flocked to the colors; and they did so again in the Second World War, hoping that in return for their sacrifices they would at last be accepted as full-fledged Frenchmen.

They were repulsed, however, and their bitter disappointment was described to me by an educated Moslem ex-serviceman in this way: "Down the generations we Moslem Algerians passionately shared the joys and sorrows of France, and bled for her in two world wars. Don't imagine that our peasants—and most of our people are peasants—do not understand what is going on, even though they cannot read or write. We knew at what a cost victory was won in 1918. We knew that in the debacle of 1940 the people of France took to the roads as refugees. We knew what Pétain stood for. When France lay prostrate, we Moslems of Algeria volunteered to fight for the restoration of her honor. We were the backbone of the French landing force in Italy. We were proud to wear the French uniform. And when our men—who at home mostly lived on starvation wages—distributed toffees and cigarettes from our French helmets to the Italian children, we did so as Frenchmen. Are we not more French than the *colon* from Spain who, a week after setting foot on Algerian soil, is naturalized and regarded as a paragon of French patriotism, while we are looked down upon as inferiors, suspect aliens? But the *colons* would have no part of us."

The first Algerian nationalist movement was started in the inter-war years by a poor youth from Tlemcen, Messali Hadj, who had emigrated to Paris to hawk carpets around the café terraces at night, and who served his political apprenticeship with the Communist party. Although he has been a prisoner of the French for the past twenty years, his organization has kept going under a variety of names. At one time it was the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties. Today it is the M.N.A. (Algerian National Movement). In 1954, a dissident group broke away from the M.N.A. to form a rival body now known as the F.L.N. (Na-

tional Liberation Front). The cleavage was an ideological one. The Messalist or M.N.A. doctrine is on the following lines: "We Moslems cannot be French: but we must be something; so we shall be independent Algerians. The *colons*, too, must become Algerians on the same footing as ourselves. We shall not reject them as they rejected us. In any case, we need them, we must have their technical know-how, and above all we cannot do without economic and cultural aid from France. If left suddenly to ourselves, not only shall we be unable to emancipate ourselves socially, but we shall be worse off than before. We shall suffer famine and chaos in our overpopulated and underdeveloped land, and slip back instead of progressing. If we press hard enough, France, which is intrinsically liberal, will ultimately see reason and make a satisfactory settlement with us."

The F.L.N. argument runs as follows: "We shall make our revolution, not with but against France. Our natural allies are our Arab brethren. Together with them we shall throw out all strangers from our midst, and form one united Arab nation from Morocco to Iraq, from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf. Unfurling the banner of Islam and anti-colonialism, we shall then push on southwards through the African continent and spread out in Asia. Glory first, bread afterwards. A new golden age is dawning for the Arabs who once again, as in times bygone, will hold sway over a vast empire."

THE Algerian civil war, inspired and directed from Cairo, was launched under an initial misconception. The F.L.N. misjudged the temper of the Moslem population and thought that a few sparks of anti-French violence would suffice to kindle an insurrectionary blaze through the country. The Moslems, however, proved unresponsive, and after the first outbreak of terrorism on November 1, 1954, there was a ten-month lull. Then the F.L.N. staged a larger massacre of Europeans, but again the Moslems were not to be inflamed. The F.L.N. drew its conclusions, and set about mobiliz-

ing the Moslem masses by other means. Blackmail by murder was resorted to on a systematic basis. The penalty for non-collaboration with the *fellagha* bands, or for non-payment of taxes to the F.L.N. collectors, was death. Everywhere sundry Moslem men, women, and children had their throats slit or were otherwise done to death: their neighbors took the hint. New recruits to the guerrilla forces were ordered to assassinate someone near their home before going off into the mountains; having thus burned their bridges they were unlikely ever to become deserters. In several villages where M.N.A. influence was strong, the F.L.N. exterminated all the male inhabitants. In district after district the entire Moslem populace was ordered to commit sabotage; the Moslems who had thereby incriminated themselves with the French would willy-nilly come to identify themselves with the rebels. The F.L.N. killers in Algeria have so far slain seven times as many Moslem as European civilians—more than 10,000 of the former, 1,500 of the latter. In metropolitan France, the proportion has been even higher—1,717 Moslems to 75 French.

Yet it stands to reason that the F.L.N. could not have maintained itself all this time by intimidation alone. The call to *djihad*, holy war against the "infidels," goes straight to the Moslems' hearts, which throb at the promise that one day the Europeans will be driven into the sea and the underlings will inherit their masters' possessions. At the same time, these hearts are permeated with the old, ingrained veneration for the French. There is a minority of Moslems who doubtless loathe the French. But most are torn by ambivalent feelings, and finding themselves caught between two fires—the *fellaghas* and the French army—the Moslem masses are in the last resort ready to throw their lot in with the ultimate victors.

If in the early stages of the rebellion, Cairo overestimated its chances, Paris underestimated the danger. For more than a year the French government paid scant attention to what was euphemistically termed the "events" in Algeria. Had it taken strong counter-

measures, in good time, the "events" would never have swelled into a full-scale revolt. The politicians, though, were too busy making and unmaking governments. They ignored the F.L.N. rebellion until their noses were rubbed in it, and then they failed to notice that a second revolt was brewing in Algeria—fomented by the *ultras* against French democracy. For some decades now, Algeria had to all intents and purposes been an autonomous state run by the *ultras* for the *ultras*, who, however, in return for subsidies from France condescended to put up a formal pretense that supreme authority was vested in Paris and in the French Governor-General. The *ultras'* low opinion of Paris declined even more when the French government simply overlooked the civil war. Finally it was moved to send in 300,000 troops after a mob of *colons* hurled insults and rotten tomatoes at Premier Guy Mollet when he came to Algiers to investigate the situation, February 6, 1956.

IN THE past the *ultras* had been quite content to lord it in Algeria, but now they felt they must go so far as to take over the helm of state in Paris itself. This was more compulsion than ambition: the *colons* genuinely, perhaps justifiably, feared that if France went on drifting Algeria would be lost. Their apocalyptic visions included seeing themselves slaughtered, or at the least expelled, by the Moslems. The humble folk who make up the main body of settlers, workers, petty officials, tradesmen—the upper crust of wealthy landowners and businessmen is no thicker than in France—love their Algerian homeland where they were born and where their forebears, up to five generations, are buried. They love the hot sun, the blue skies, the wild landscape which has entered into their own blood. No greater calamity could befall them than to be uprooted from their native soil.

A settlers' revolt could succeed only if it was supported by the army. The bulk of the army officers and men were metropolitan Frenchmen, new to Algeria. They too were disgusted with the Paris politicians. About

a quarter of the rank and file were young Communists who, before embarking for Algeria, had engaged in mutinous protests against their participation in a "dirty colonialist war." But on their arrival they had been shocked by the F.L.N. atrocities, perpetrated more often than not against inoffensive Moslem civilians. They soon came to realize that it was out of the question for France to abandon the people of Algeria to the mercy of the rebels. Thus, by and large the French troops were convinced they were fighting a just cause, but were not being helped to fight it the right way by the government, which might leave them in the lurch at any moment.

Like the men, the officers were divided into two schools of thought. The activists wanted to hit out hard. "We have overwhelming strength," they said, "so why don't we use it? The Moslem population collaborate with the F.L.N. because the F.L.N. terrorize them. Well, let's terrorize them more than the F.L.N. can and they'll come over to our side."

The humanitarians said: "If we start emulating the F.L.N., we may as well pack up. We have to bring the Moslems round by convincing them that we are out to give them a square deal and not perpetuate the *colons'* privileges. Let's organize more labor camps for the unemployed who join the *fellaghas* out of sheer desperation. Let's build schools for the children. Let's try to deliver the womenfolk from their veiled bondage. Let's help civilize these unhappy folk."

As it turned out, Paris satisfied neither the activists nor the humanitarians. The government shuddered at the suggestion of holocausts of the innocent, yet it looked the other way when unnecessarily brutal repression and Gestapo-like police methods were perpetrated in certain sectors. It issued specific orders to the military to win the Moslems over by kindness. In the way of direct, planned social welfare work, the army actually did more for the Moslems in the last two years than the *colons* had done in a century. But it was not carried far enough. And, most important of all, the government

did not dare loosen the *ultras'* stranglehold on the civil administration in Algeria.

Meanwhile everybody in the army, bully or idealist, cook or colonel, was exasperated to tears by the sorry spectacle of the fall of one French government after another. This demonstration of political impotence was prolonging the bloodshed in Algeria and could lead to ultimate disaster. It encouraged the F.L.N. and the Moslems generally to believe that feckless France would sooner or later cut her losses in Algeria and shuffle out as she had done from Morocco, Tunisia, Indochina, Syria, and the Lebanon. There were ugly signs of dissidence among the settlers and in the army. There was the *ultras'* bazooka attempt on the life of General Salan, commander-in-chief of the Algerian forces, because he was no champion of "activist" holocausts. There was the bombing of the little Tunisian town of Sakiet, carried out by a local commander in the field without the consent or foreknowledge of the government. But Paris closed its eyes to the danger signals.

ON MAY 13 last, the *ultras* were emboldened to strike a decisive blow. They stormed Government House in Algiers. Only a handful of senior officers, the "clique of colonels," were in the conspiracy. The rebels—now it was European rebels—had acted on the presumption that the disgruntled army would accept the *fait accompli* and join the *ultras* in their fateful endeavor to dictate the law to Paris. The gamble came off. General Salan, who was at first hissed by the mob, was willing after a little hesitation to dispatch an ultimatum to Paris. The gist of it was that parliament would at its peril elect to the premiership the progressive Catholic leader, Pierre Pflimlin, who was rumored to be in favor of negotiations with the Moslem rebels.

Parliament took the ultimatum coolly and proceeded to invest Pflimlin with the premiership. It cut communications with Algeria, and—now that it was too late—settled down to a trial of strength with the *ultras*, who had meanwhile gone into partnership

with the army in the so-called Public Safety Committees governing Algeria.

At this point of the Algerian tragedy, miracles came to pass. In the army, the humanitarian element prevailed and obliged the *ultras* to endorse—or at least pay lip service to—an idea that had always been anathema to them: the integration of the Moslems, who were to be promoted to the status of full-fledged Frenchmen equal in every respect to the *colons*. There followed the fantastic scenes of Franco-Moslem fraternization which, after being initially stage-managed, became spontaneous and even hysterical. These demonstrations were an explosion of mingled fear and relief. The *colons*, obsessed with the fear of losing their homes, were willing now to pay, as it were, a higher rent: to accord equal rights to the Moslems. The Moslems, for their part, had expected a pogrom after the *ultras'* coup and were relieved to find themselves being warmly embraced instead. France tottered on the brink of civil war. The army, which had sent paratroopers into Corsica, was poised for a putsch against Paris. The *ultras* were for a military dictatorship in France. They hoped to become the wire-pullers behind some puppet ruler in general's uniform. The generals, already guilty of a grave breach of discipline, were reluctant to let themselves in for plain treason. They sought a compromise settlement which would keep up the appearances of Republican legality: they demanded the formation of a new government under de Gaulle. The *ultras*, ex-Pétainists to a man, dejectedly joined in the chorus of "We want de Gaulle!"

Parliament abdicated in favor of de Gaulle, and the former Resistance leader emerged from twelve years of self-imposed exile in the political wilderness. What his precise plans were no one knew. In France he was taken on trust. He had saved the country once before, and if he could not do so again then no one could. In Algeria, the *colons* were elated. They had often broken governments, but now for the first time they had made one, and they were determined to keep it in their clutches. So on his arrival

in Algiers, early in June, de Gaulle was met by the *colons* with jubilant shouts more sinister than the overripe tomatoes which had greeted the last visiting prime minister. "*Algérie française! Algérie française!*" the mob yelled in unison for hours upon end. The message was: "We put you where you are, de Gaulle. Now do as we tell you! Establish an *Algérie française* on the lines we want, and no nonsense!"

De Gaulle has been very discreet about his diagnosis of the Algerian trouble; but his findings may easily be guessed from his actions and from certain remarks he has dropped. On the one hand, he has dealt a blow to the *ultras*—a feat never before accomplished by any French government. On the other hand, he has notified the F.L.N. in unmistakable terms that there will be no French surrender—"to abandon Algeria [to the F.L.N.] would be stupid and cowardly," he declared.

TO ANY well-informed observer of the Algerian scene who is sufficiently detached to take in the picture as a whole, it is obvious that the country is afflicted with two cancerous growths which are battling for supremacy. The one, of long standing, is virulent European colonialism incarnated in the *ultras*. The other, of more recent origin but no less virulent, is pan-Arab imperialism; its spearhead in Algeria is the F.L.N., but the shaft is handled from Cairo. It will go ill with the Algerians if they succumb to either of these afflictions. The two extremist adversaries in Algeria are alike totalitarian. As far as the *ultras* are concerned, there is nothing secret about their aims. When I saw their leader, Dr. Lefèvre, he said quite candidly: "We will not rest until we carry over into metropolitan France the revolution we started here on May 13. We mean to abolish the parliamentary system, and set up a corporative regime based on the ideas of Mussolini and the social doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. Franco's Spain and Salazar's Portugal will serve as our model. We shall probably have to have a civil war and get rid of de Gaulle, but that can't be

helped." This is what would happen if the *ultras* were to have their way.

As against that, suppose that the F.L.N. rebels were to have their way. What then? The French army would be evacuated, together with the *colons* who could not and would not stay behind to be expropriated, if not exterminated. Another spectacular departure, possibly to the next world, would be that of Tunisia's pro-Western President Habib Bourguiba, who has replaced the late Nuri es-Said of Iraq as Nasser's Arab Enemy Number One. Cairo would impose its hegemony over the whole of North Africa. France, to make room for the refugees from Algeria, if for no other reason, would repatriate the 400,000 Moslems whose earnings keep 2,000,000 relatives in Algeria alive today. The abrupt cessation of French economic aid to Algeria—this year alone it will come to \$500 million—would reduce the country to famine and chaos. This prospect does not frighten the rebels. A leading F.L.N. intellectual told me: "We shall suffer dire poverty, but we do not mind, so long as we regain our dignity." This regained dignity, in poverty, hunger, and ignorance, might well take the form of expansionist adventures through Africa and Asia Minor, where Israel, after the defeat of France, would be regarded as the last alien intruder inside the Arab world. In any case, Europe would be cut off from the Sahara oil and from the Negro peoples of Africa. Since the new pan-Arab empire could not stand alone, and would lean on Moscow and Peking rather than on London and Washington, the Russian penetration of Africa would be a foregone conclusion.

These perils receded into the realm of abstract speculation after the referendum that was held in France and Algeria at the end of September. In France, some 80 per cent of the electorate—including 1,500,000 habitual Communist voters, who on this occasion deviated from the party line—proclaimed their confidence in de Gaulle. Now that he drew his strength from the democratically expressed will of the nation, which had rallied round him in new-found unity,

de Gaulle lost no time in pulverizing the *ultras'* influence. He ordered the army officers to quit the Algerian Public Safety Committees. The *ultras*, left to themselves, collapsed in a fluster of idle menaces. Nothing came of their threatened march to the Forum, of their call for a general strike. Their rout was complete and, for the first time in living memory, Paris, not Algiers, was the capital of Algeria. The *ultras* clamored for the integration of Algeria into France and for a strong government. They got both.

THE results of the referendum in Algeria itself were no less significant. The F.L.N. threw into the electoral campaign all the weapons in its arsenal—guns, bombs, knives, and propaganda—to deter the Moslems from voting. In what was their most intensive, far-flung operation since the outbreak of hostilities, they unleashed a terrorist offensive in metropolitan France. They set oil storage tanks ablaze, tried to blow up the Eiffel Tower; they laid an ambush in the heart of Paris, in broad daylight, against Minister of Information Jacques Soustelle, who, by the way, was largely instrumental in giving a Gaullist twist to the *ultras'* May 13 uprising. To make a still bigger impression, the F.L.N. set up in Cairo a "Free Algerian Government." The Moslems in Algeria were warned that if they went to the polls, it would be under pain of death.

The referendum developed into the biggest battle yet of the guerrilla war. Had the Moslems abstained on a large scale from voting, the F.L.N. could rightfully claim to have scored a resounding victory. In the event, the rebels suffered a crushing defeat, for no less than 75 per cent of the Moslem population went to the polls. With every available French soldier, including deskmen, out on duty, the F.L.N. did not dare to attack. Indeed the country was so quiet that wits suggested there should be a referendum every day and then there would be no more violence. Almost as many Moslem women as men voted. Quite a few of these women were having their first glimpse of the outside world since puberty. They were expos-

ing themselves not only to the possible wrath of the F.L.N., but to the certain anger of their husbands, fathers, and brothers. Outside the polling stations at the foot of the Casbah, scuffles broke out among Arabs competing to get to the ballot box first. Voters had to wait hours in long queues. The authorities had never, even in their most sanguine mood, anticipated anything like this.

It might be argued that in the *bled*, the countryside, the Moslems voted because they were more anxious to keep on good terms with the French army than they were afraid of being slaughtered by the F.L.N. But what made the Casbah Arabs besiege the polling stations the way they did? How explain that Moslems whose names had accidentally been omitted from the electoral lists stood around all day insisting that they should be allowed to vote? Some of them had to be ejected from the polling stations when they became over-impudent. True, this was the first occasion when Moslems voted on a footing of equality with the *colons*. For the first time, also, an Algerian election had not been "fixed" in advance: a perfectly honest count was assured by the presence of a control commission formed of metropolitan French magistrates. Still, there must have been some other deep-lying motive for the stampede to the polls. It could only be that the Algerians had grown weary of the ceaseless strife. Surely they hoped that, thanks to this mystic ritual of dropping a white slip of paper marked *oui* into a wooden box, the Big Marabout General de Gaulle would now at last lead them into the promised era of peace with justice.

At Constantine, addressing a predominantly Moslem crowd, de Gaulle disclosed his peace plan. He interpreted the referendum results as a "mutual pledge" between Algeria and France and the overseas territories "to build together their future of liberty, equality, and fraternity." For Algeria, the way out of its sufferings lay through a "profound transformation"—"living conditions for every man and woman must improve day by day; the resources of

the soil, the human potentialities, the native elite must be brought out and developed; the children must be educated; the whole of Algeria must partake of the well-being and dignity offered by modern civilization."

To this end, the government had adopted a five-year plan of sweeping social and economic reforms. At least every one in ten newcomers to the state administration in metropolitan France would henceforth be chosen from the Arab, Berber, Kabylia, and the Mozabite, that is, Moslem, communities of Algeria. An increased proportion of Moslems—80 per cent—would be admitted to the Algerian civil service. Wages and salaries would be brought up to the same high level as in metropolitan France. 1,200,000 acres of newly fertilized land would be distributed among Moslem farmers. The first phase of industrialization would be completed, with the exploitation of the Algerian oil and natural gas deposits, and the establishment of large metallurgical and chemical plants. A million new dwellings would be built, adequate roads, communications and sanitary facilities would be provided. Regular employment would be created for 400,000 more workers. Two-thirds of all the Moslem boys and girls would be put to school within the next five years, and after another three years education would be universal. The human contacts already initiated, chiefly by the army, would have to be further cultivated.

OUT of the program of emancipation the political status of Algeria would emerge. To begin with, at least two-thirds of the 70 deputies elected in Algeria and the Sahara for the French parliament would be Moslems. "In any event," added de Gaulle, "the future of Algeria will—because it is in the nature of things—be built on a dual basis: Algeria's own personality and Algeria's close solidarity with metropolitan France." De Gaulle stressed that "France alone is willing and able" to make the necessary investments that would swiftly raise Algeria from the dark ages into the 20th century.

De Gaulle's historic Constantine speech ended with an appeal to the rebels: "Why

kill? People must be helped to live! Why destroy? Our duty is to build! Why hate? Cooperation is wanted. End this absurd combat, and hope will blossom again everywhere in Algeria, the prisons will empty, a future will unfold itself spacious enough for everybody and, in particular, for you. . . . The human race today has the choice of only two ways: war or fraternity. In Algeria, as elsewhere, France for her part has chosen fraternity."

Later, through Moslem intermediaries, de Gaulle contacted the F.L.N. leaders in Cairo. Since secrets are better guarded in the French Fifth Republic than they were in the Fourth, the burden of his message can only be divined. There is reason to believe, however, that—translated from diplomatic into everyday terms—it was to the following effect: "There are, as you perfectly well know, absolutely imperative reasons—moral as well as practical—why France cannot and will not here and now give up Algeria. At the same time, we do not deny the Algerian people's right to self-determination by normal democratic processes. Without prejudice to the ultimate political status of Algeria, let us arrange a truce, hold unfettered elections. While passions are cooling off, France will proceed with the economic and social emancipation of Algeria on a scale and at a speed never before attempted in any under-developed country. Thereafter the Algerians will take for themselves whatever status they want, anything from integration with France to complete independence. In twenty years from now—not a long time in the life of a country which through the millennia has never known nationhood or statehood—when the present tensions between the various Algerian communities, arising from different standards of living, will have disappeared, Algeria will be mature enough to strike out on whatever path she chooses. Accept a cease-fire. It is obvious that the F.L.N. cannot beat the French army, if the army stays—and it will stay in Algeria. Moreover, the Moslem population is more and more withdrawing its support from the *fellaghas*. We can, and if necessary will, intensify our

military effort to wipe out the F.L.N. But we had rather not do so. There has already been enough blood-letting and hatred. Let us get together to rebuild the future in a spirit of fraternity."

Several F.L.N. leaders, and notably Ferhat Abbas, head of the "Free Algerian Government," intimated their readiness to accept the proffered hand of reconciliation. On October 23, at a press conference in Paris, de Gaulle formally proposed a "peace of the brave." He praised the courage of the rebels, which is undeniable, and he breathed not a word about the equally undeniable savagery of men whose practice it has been to throw bombs at Moslem children attending schools run by the French. But bygones were to be bygones, the time had come to forgive and forget all around, for there has been bestiality on both sides.

The F.L.N., however, is more of an Egyptian than an Algerian organization, and Nasser—himself under the shadow of Khrushchev—vetoed the peace agreement. The more intransigent leaders then began to mutter vaguely about the imminent reinforcement of the Algerian *fellaghas* with "foreign volunteers"—that is with Russians.

De Gaulle, stubborn as ever in the pursuit of his fixed objective, went on to liberate more than 10,000 Algerian nationalists from the detention camps, in preparation for the general elections. He wanted to have before him in the French parliament authentic spokesmen of the Algerian people. He did not care if they were F.L.N., M.N.A., or anything else—he had let it be known that Ferhat Abbas could, if he so wished, present himself as a candidate—so long as they were truly representative. Only criminals, those who had themselves physically done the killing, raping, or looting, were barred.

In the event, the elections were vitiated by the fear-psychosis with which all Algerians are smitten. The F.L.N. was afraid to expose itself to a possible disavowal by the electorate. Moderate Moslem nationalists and European liberals would not be coaxed into the limelight, for they were liable to be set upon and crushed either by the rebels or

the *ultras* or both, who have for so long occupied the center of the Algerian stage. Not all the assurances from Paris could persuade the progressive Algerian elements that the army would become overnight the protector of nonconformist politicians. A few Socialists and some enlightened Moslems, who took de Gaulle's Constantine speech as their electoral platform, tried to come forward; but the bulk of the candidates were out-and-out integrationists. Thus, the seventy-one Algerian members of the new French parliament will reflect a single shade, rather than the whole spectrum, of political opinion in this country.

De Gaulle was disappointed, but not discouraged, by this sharp setback to his step-by-step plan for the establishment of peace with justice. He has not given up his attempt to find "valid interlocutors" in Algeria, with whom the government will seek an agreed solution to the Algerian dilemma. His task now is to vanquish fear, even in the absence of a truce. Such conditions must be created that moderate-minded Algerians, both European and Moslem, will feel it safe to interpose themselves between the two extremist adversaries, to challenge the common thesis of the *ultras* and the rebels that a struggle to the death is the only way to a better life. The Algerian masses must be encouraged to assert themselves at last against the fanatics in either camp. To this end, de Gaulle has set about reorganizing the army in Algeria. Not only must it be a more efficient striking force against the enfeebled *fellaghas*, but it must still further detach itself from the weakened *ultras*. It must manifestly owe undivided allegiance to the central civil authority in Paris, impartially serving the welfare of the Algerian people as a whole.

When will peace with justice come to Algeria? Peace may come soon, but the introduction of justice will be an arduous and gradual process. What is certain is that only a France liberal, generous, strong, and resolute, can at this juncture dispense the justice without which Algeria cannot achieve enduring peace.